

I had the opportunity to attend a farewell reception for Ambassador Chen yesterday evening here in the Capitol—an event sponsored by the Majority and Minority Leaders of both the House and Senate. The bipartisan participation in the fond farewell was a great illustration of the wonderful friendships C.J. has nurtured while serving his country here in Washington.

As C.J. prepares to return to Taiwan, I want to offer my thanks to him for his professionalism and his friendship. The people of Taiwan should know that they have been ably served by an outstanding diplomat.

We will miss him and we wish him well.

HONORING THE 29TH ANNUAL CAPITAL PRIDE FESTIVAL

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 9, 2004

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the 29th Annual Capital Pride Festival, a celebration of the National Capital Area's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) communities, their families and friends.

Since its beginning in 1975, the Capital Pride Festival has grown from a small block party to a seven-day series of events. This year, the Pride Parade will be held on June 12th and will culminate in a Street Festival on Pennsylvania Avenue, attended by people of all backgrounds from the District and the region. To emphasize the universality of human rights and the importance of enacting congressional bills addressed to the human rights of the GLBT community, I have marched in the Pride parades since coming to Congress. I have seen the festival and parade grow bigger and better each year and with it the spread of support of equal rights for this community.

This year's theme of "Pride + Vote = Power" holds special meaning for the citizens of the District of Columbia and its GLBT community in particular. It has been nine years since the District of Columbia lost the first vote we ever won on the floor of the House of Representatives, the delegate vote in the Committee of the Whole. That vote was retracted when the Republicans assumed control of the House. Our city of nearly 600,000 residents, the only jurisdiction in the United States subject to "Taxation Without Representation," is entitled to that vote now and to the full voting representation that has always been our birthright.

American citizens who live in our nation's capital, have fought in every American war, including the present war in Iraq and Afghanistan, are taxed without full representation in the House and do not have any representatives in the Senate. The joy of the Capital Pride Festival contrasts with the lot of GLBT soldiers who have volunteered to protect our country with their lives and must serve in silence and without the open support of their chosen families and communities, neither asking nor telling.

Neither here nor elsewhere has Congress protected sexual orientation from discrimination in our country. Despite increasing reports of violence and physical abuse against Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Ameri-

cans, Congress has not enacted protections against hate crimes. Congress must pass the Hate Crimes Prevention Act. Congress must pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA). Congress must pass the Permanent Partners Immigration Act. And Congress must pass the No Taxation Without Representation Act.

In June we will rejoice in the accomplishments of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender community. We will also remember those who live on only in our hearts and prayers. As we gather to celebrate and reflect, we must continue the fight for full democracy in the District of Columbia and full civil rights for the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender people in the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to join me in saluting the 29th Annual Capital Pride Festival, its presenter, Whitman-Walker Clinic, and the sponsors and volunteers whose dedicated and creative energy make the Capital Pride Festival possible.

CONGRATULATIONS TO WEST- MINSTER CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

HON. WM. LACY CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 9, 2004

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Westminster Christian Academy in St. Louis, Missouri for winning the "Foundations of Democracy" unit award in the "We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution" 2004 program. The "We the People" program is a competition on the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights in which students are challenged to apply their knowledge of constitutional principles and understanding of historical facts to contemporary situations. The program is designed to promote an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizens in our constitutional democracy.

Westminster Christian Academy is an independent, coeducational, college preparatory school serving grades 7–12 located in St. Louis County. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to congratulate the individual members of Westminster's team for their outstanding performance in this year's competition: Britney Bennett, Chris Collum, Ryan Dabler, Jessica Degnan, J.D. Gustafson, Gerrod Heise, Nina Hiles, Rebecca Keffler, Angela Ludwinski, Lindsay McClure, Joeana Middleton, Neil Peterson, Katie Poland, Jennifer Reinwart, Amanda Rill, Jennifer Schaffner, Elizabeth Simon, Lily Strand, Steve Vitale, and their teacher, Ken Boesch.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 9, 2004

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, June 8, 2004, I was unavoidably detained and thus missed Rollcall No. 229 and No. 230. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on Rollcall No. 229, expressing the profound regret and sorrow of the House of Represent-

atives on the death of Ronald Wilson Reagan, former President of the United States of America, and "nay" on Rollcall No. 230, on approving the journal.

HONORING SALVATORE PUNZO ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIRE- MENT

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 9, 2004

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to join the many family, friends, and colleagues who have gathered to extend my best wishes to my good friend, Salvatore Punzo, as he celebrates his retirement after 35 years in education.

I have often spoke of our Nation's need for talented educators ready to help our children learn and grow. Sal has been just that kind of teacher and administrator. In a career that has spanned over three decades, he has touched the lives of thousands of our young people—helping them to build a strong foundation for their future success. We owe a debt of gratitude to teachers like Sal, who so willingly dedicate themselves to ensuring that our children have access to the best possible education.

Our teachers and school administrators spend many hours with our children, ensuring that they develop the tools and skills they will need as they continue their education and move into adulthood. Sal began his career in education as a teacher with the New Haven Public School system, where he spent the next 16 years in teaching grades three through five. In that time, he developed a strong reputation for his commitment to education and to meeting the needs of his students. After being appointed to a new administrator's mentoring program, he went on to serve as an assistant principal and finally, for nearly two decades, as the Principal of East Rock Magnet School.

After 17 years, Sal will now retire as the Principal of East Rock Magnet School—one of the most successful magnet schools in the State of Connecticut. Under his tenure, East Rock has blossomed—receiving numerous awards and recognitions, including being named a Vanguard School. In fact, just last year, I was honored to join Sal at East Rock to celebrate the success of the Model Laptop Program. This program, funded by one of only five such U.S. Department of Education grants in the country, tests the impact of introducing laptops in third through fifth grade classrooms. The success of East Rock, with this program and so many others, is remarkable and testament to Sal's leadership.

Salvatore Punzo has dedicated a lifetime to making a difference in the lives of children through education. We are so fortunate to have people like him working with our young people. Teacher, administrator, and advocate—he embodies all that an educator should be. I am proud to stand today and join his wife, Carmela; his children Sal and Michael; his five grandchildren, family, friends, and colleagues in congratulating Salvatore Punzo on the occasion of his retirement. My best wishes for many more years of health and happiness.